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INDIA: Renewed Violence in Punjab

The new wave of terrorist action grows out of the increasing factionalism in the Sikh movement, which is demanding greater autonomy from New Delhi. Sikh terrorists, according to press reports, set fire to 37 rural rail stations on Sunday in order to disrupt the movement of Hindu labor that is essential to the spring harvest. The government has dispatched additional railway police to guard the stations and declared a curfew. New Delhi also has arrested nearly 150 members of the Sikh student union that it is blaming for the renewed violence. [REDACTED]

Comment: Sikh moderates and their rural supporters want to negotiate with the government, but the militants, who are trying to gain control of the movement, are resisting. The militants believe the assassination last week of a prominent Sikh extremist was arranged by more moderate Sikh leaders. The raids on the stations were a show of strength by the militants, and they probably also were meant to punish farmers for supporting the moderates. The moderates may assist government efforts to restore order. [REDACTED]